(b) the factors taken into consideration for the ranking; and

(c) the manner in which Government propose to make use of this study?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO) : (a) to (c) The report, also available on the website of the Confederation of Indian Industry (www. ciionline.org) has attempted to rank 36 cities in the country based on the criteria relating to communication, finance, transport, professional education, tourism (leisure & business), relative growth etc., for which good quality data was made available. Three to five variables were used for each of the selected criteria. On the basis of analysis attempted in the report, Delhi has been ranked number one as per the overall index ranking. The information contained in the report can be utilized by organisations/individuals in making business and other decisions.

Industrial development of Jodhpur-Pali sector

4499. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU) : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of prospect of the setting up of new industrial units in Jodhpur-Pali sector after the availability of cheap and non-stop supply of Natural Gas through pipelines between Jodhpur and Kota;

(b) whether Government have drawn the blueprint for the prospective industrial development in this sector; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO) : (a) to (c) In order to supply gas within Rajasthan, a new pipeline network is being planned by Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL). The work for laying gas pipelines between Kota and Jodhpur will be taken up after the completion of the detailed feasibility report for the project. It is expected that the feasibility report for the project would be completed by April 2004.

Under the liberalised industrial policy regime, prospect of setting up of industries depends upon the commercial perception of entrepreneurs regarding availability of supportive infrastructure and overall business environment.

However, the availability of natural gas in future would serve as a catalyst to reinvigorate industrial activity in that area.

Closure of paper mills in various States

4500. SHRI SURENDRA LATH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of paper mills closed down in various States during the last three years;

(b) the reasons for the closure of these paper mills;

(c) whether Government have any proposal to revive these paper mills;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO) : (a) The data regarding the number of paper mills closed down in the country is not centrally maintained. However, during the period from 1.1.2000 to 31.3.2003, cases of 76 sick pulp and paper mills were registered with the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), a quasi-judicial body, under the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985. State-wise number of sick paper mills is at Statement (*See* below).

(b) Major reasons of sickness as reported by the sick companies at the time of their registration include change in Government policies, managerial/ production/technical/marketing/financial problems and lack of adequate infrastructure, delay in sanction and disbursement of Term Loan by Financial Institutions/ Banks, and high interest cost.

(c) to (e) Under the existing policy on industrial sickness, the BIFR deals with the problem of sick industrial companies. Revival of sick industrial units is also undertaken by amalgamation/merger of sick units with healthy units and this is encouraged by granting income-tax concession, etc. to healthy units, which undertake such amalgamation. The Reserve Bank of India has also issued guidelines to banks and financial institutions for strengthening the monitoring systems and arresting industrial sickness at the incipient stage. No proposal is under consideration in the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion for revival of sick paper mills.